



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m.

PLEDGE TO FLAG

ROLL CALL: Adams, Fernandes, Johnson, Masi, O'Rourke, Robertson

ABSENT: Arnold

OTHERS PRESENT: Assistant City Manager Jaquays, Acting Chief of Police Kolke, HR Director Sears, DPW Superintendent Ladd

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES:

Commissioner Fernandes requested discussion on a Hanukkah Celebration to be added to the agenda, under discussion item number four.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

P&R 10-01-23 APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2023, PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Fernandes, seconded by Johnson, **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY:** To approve the September 11, 2023, Parks and Recreation meeting minutes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

DISCUSSION:

1. Market Place Update

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that there are just three markets left this season. Ms. Hall said she is happy to report that she is still seeing great vendor participation while wrapping up the season compared to previous years, as well as new vendors starting up just to preview the market before committing to next year. Ms. Hall expressed that there are usually around 10-15 vendors within September/ October due to the kids being back in school and the colder temperatures. Ms. Hall said she is still seeing

vendor numbers in the upper 20s, early 30s. Ms. Hall said a Fall Festival was hosted back on September 20th and it was very successful. Ms. Hall said she got rid of most of their giveaways and folks really enjoyed the cider and donuts. Ms. Hall mentioned she will be hosting their final festival of the season next Wednesday, October 18th from 11am-2pm. Ms. Hall said it will be a similar set-up to the last one with live music, sweet treats (little pies, sugar cookies, etc.), free giveaways (hot cocoa bags, coloring books, pens, etc.), and the Walled Lake Library will be giving out craft kits. Ms. Hall said that she hopes to see some of the board members there and thanked the board for all their support this season, while she hopes for an even better season next year. Ms. Hall also said that, with the transition to the Market Place, she continues to see increased usage of the trailway and she will continue to have a presence out there in the coming months as the city works to update signage to make it the Walled Lake Trail and identify any code enforcement/safety concerns.

Chairman O'Rourke said it is great to see the ongoing growth of the market over the years. Mr. O'Rourke said it is great to hear that vendor numbers have gone up and what is being done with the trail. Mr. O'Rourke gave a shout out to DPW Superintendent Dan Ladd and his team for all that they do to set the market up. Mr. O'Rourke pointed out that he recognizes the market is a lot of work and even items, such as making the tremendous flyers, are remarkable and thanked staff for their efforts.

Commissioner Adams concurred with Mr. O'Rourke's previous statements, explaining she is happy to see the growth in the market and increase in vendors. Ms. Adams suggested that, for next season, the city consider updating the schedule. Ms. Adams said, as a vendor herself, she noticed that after Labor Day there was a decrease in vendors and participants. Ms. Adams mentioned that some of this decrease could be from kids going back to school and weather changes. Ms. Adams also noted that vendors and patrons may have jobs that prevent them from attending during the day, or other activities in general. Ms. Adams suggested transitioning to a weekend market or evening market to alleviate some of the above issues. Ms. Adams believes this will also help with attendance at the market's festivals, after school starts up some kids are unable to attend and participate, as well as anyone who works or has other commitments.

Chairman O'Rourke said that the commission has looked at transitioning to weekends in the past and the issue came up that a lot of the market's vendors participate at other weekend markets.

Commissioner Adams suggested transitioning to an evening market and maybe looking at implementing staff incentives.

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that there has been discussions, and other suggestions, for a weekend or evening market. However, as Mr. O'Rourke mentioned, many of the vendors participate at weekend markets and would no longer be able to attend. Ms. Hall said staff would be open to discussing an evening market for future seasons.

2. Trunk-or-Treat

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said Mayor Ackley's Trunk or Treat event is right around the corner, taking place on Sunday, October 29th from 12pm-2pm. Ms. Hall said she has been working with Greenhouse staff on planning the event. Ms. Hall said she is happy to report the petting zoo and pony rides have been secured for the event to set-up at Riley Park. Ms. Hall said there are already at least 30 volunteers to set up trunks and are open to others joining, to make it an even bigger event for children to participate in. Ms. Hall said she is adding two new components this year, including a photo booth opportunity and game/ prize component. Ms. Hall said the photo booth will have a backdrop, props, hay bales, pumpkins, and a life-size scarecrow. Ms. Hall said she will be adding a Halloween themed game, where children will have the chance to win 1/3 big prize baskets (i.e. movie basket, day at the beach basket, and game night basket). Ms. Hall said she should have everything ordered and the details finalized by the end of the week. Ms. Hall said she hopes to see some of the board members there.

Chairman O'Rourke said that everything sounds great and asked how we were able to get the items to add the photo booth, such as the life-sized scarecrow, and prize components. Mr. O'Rourke asked if the items were donated or how they were obtained.

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that she is thankful to be working internally, with staff and our different departments, to get the items. Ms. Hall said a member of the police department has been gracious enough to lend us their life-sized scarecrow, a staff member is allowing the use of their backdrop, and the props will be purchased. Ms. Hall gave a shout out to DPW Superintendent Dan Ladd and his team for finding the spray paint to make the police trunk happen and the hay bales for the photo booth. Ms. Hall said she has also been working with Greenhouse staff to make everything happen.

3. Tree Lighting Ceremony

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that the tree lighting will be taking place on Monday, December 4th at 7pm. Ms. Hall said that staff has chosen a nutcracker theme. Ms. Hall said around 150 nutcracker ornaments have already been ordered and she will be working on getting the candy canes and hot cocoa supplies too. Ms. Hall said she will be contacting Meijer, Walmart, and Costco to see if they are willing to donate to the tree lighting again this year. Ms. Hall announced that she has secured Pastor Paul from St. Matthews to do the invocation this year. Ms. Hall said she has also secured a Mrs. Claus and is still diligently working to find a Mr. Claus. Ms. Hall said any suggestions or assistance in doing so would be appreciated. Ms. Hall said that she has begun to line up the entertainment again this year, such as the Glee Club and marching bands. Ms. Hall said that the Twirl M's are unfortunately no longer. However, Ms. Hall said she has reached out to Big City Dance who have expressed interest. Ms. Hall said she will be sure to send out more details, when the event gets closer, as to when we will need the board members to show up and assist.

Chairman O'Rourke asked whether we are looking for a professional Mr. Claus, or a community member.

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that the city is open to hiring a professional if necessary but would prefer if a community member filled the role. Ms. Hall said that the last individual who filled in for Mr. Claus is no longer available to act in that role this year.

Commissioner Adams said she will reach out to her connections to see if anyone may be available. Ms. Adams asked if we are publicly advertising the need for a Mr. Claus, or if we are handling it internally.

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Hall said that the city is handling the search for Mr. Claus internally at this time. Ms. Hall said she has reached out to individuals in the different departments. Ms. Hall said she is open to feedback as to how to advertise the need.

4. Hanukkah Celebration

Commissioner Fernandes said that she wanted to confirm the city has placed Hanukkah plans on their calendar. Mrs. Fernandes said that Hanukkah starts on December 7th, three days after our annual tree lighting, and that we usually do something for it.

DPW Superintendent Dan Ladd said that the menorah will be placed out front of the library again this year. Mr. Ladd said the rabbi usually coordinates the celebration with the church. Mr. Ladd said no one has contacted the city about the event as of today.

P&R 10-02-23 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Kaylee Hall
Recording Secretary

Dennis O'Rourke
Chairman